

Troutbitten Wader Washing Article: Original Replies

Read the full Troutbitten article here:

<https://troutbitten.com/2023/09/07/critical-wader-care-advice-from-the-companies-themselves-how-to-wash-and-dry-your-waders/>

Question #1:

How often should we wash our waders? After how many trips, or is there an indication that waders should be washed, such as seeing wet out on the legs?

Question #2:

Specifically, what detergent or soap?

Question #3:

Hand wash only, or is machine wash acceptable?

Question #4

Is using the dryer on low/delicate okay, or should waders always be line dried?

Question #5

After washing, how should the DWR finish be rejuvenated? And how often? Every time or less than that?

Skwala

How often should we wash our waders? After how many trips, or is there an indication that waders should be washed, such as seeing wet out on the legs?

For some reason, many people are afraid to wash technical gear, whether it be a waterproof jacket or a pair of breathable waders. There is no reason to be concerned here. In fact, we encourage it. Frequent (every few uses) rinsing of your waders is great to remove any substances on the face of the textile that may have come in contact while on the water that might accumulate over time.

Periodic washing with a light detergent every 15-20 days of use will help to clean any body oils, greases, dirt or foreign substances that might negatively impact the performance and breathability of your waders. If you notice any areas that look to be stained or dirty, a quick wash can help to remove anything that may interfere or break down the laminates or membrane of the waterproof/breathable textile.

Indicators for washing really vary with type of use. If you're hiking all day in sand or sweating a lot in them, more frequent washing will keep the breathability up. Additionally, if there is significant ground in dirt of the face fabric washing them will help to reactivate the DWR coating.

Specifically, what detergent or soap?

Using a small amount of a light detergent without any fabric softeners or bleach is recommended when washing your waders.

If you feel inclined, a specialty detergent engineered for technical fabrics. We really like the Revivex Pro Cleaner. These will help to break down any foreign materials on the wader and clear the textile's pores to improve both waterproofness as well as breathability. It is also important to take care of your neoprene feet. We use an antimicrobial treatment on our neoprene stocking feet but it is critical to keep organic matter like algae and bacteria in check if you want to get years of use out of your waders.

Hand wash only, or is machine wash acceptable?

Both machine wash and hand wash are acceptable ways to wash your waders, although if you machine wash it must be a front load machine without

an agitator. The length of your waders wrapped around an agitator could damage your wader seams. If you choose to wash your waders in the washing machine, it is important to do so on a delicate cold water cycle and only to use light detergents without fabric softeners or bleach.

Is using the dryer on low/delicate okay, or should waders always be line dried?

Skwala waders should be hang dried only. The reason for this is that we generally don't know from dryer to dryer what the temperature is. One person's drier could be fine while another is hot enough to start to soften the glue in the tape. Simply hang the waders by the locker loop until dry, then reverse inside out to complete the drying process. Check areas such as the pockets, shoulder straps, and stocking feet for any residual moisture.

It is of the utmost importance that your waders are fully dried on both the exterior as well as interior of the wader before storing. Properly drying waders is critical to prevent the potential growth of any mildew or mold that can build if stored wet for a prolonged period.

Mold or mildew have the potential to break down the laminates and membrane of the textile. Hanging waders in a controlled environment is a great way to ensure they remain protected from unnecessary moisture.

After washing, how should the DWR finish be rejuvenated? And how often? Every time or less than that?

Washing your waders will help to clean pores of the textile and allow all the properties of the waterproof/breathable textile to function properly though over time the DWR will become less and less effective.

If you notice areas of the wader that are routinely wetting out we recommend treating the outside of the garment with Gear Aid Revivex and let it air dry for 24 hours before use. This allows for the DWR to fully set in without the use of a drier.

Orvis

How often should we wash our waders? After how many trips, or is there an indication that waders should be washed, such as seeing wet out on the legs?

It is a great idea to periodically wash waders and waterproof jackets. Washing will help remove dirt and debris that may cause additional wear and tear, as well as clean out bacteria and mold that builds up over time.

With that being said it can be a bit tough on the fabric so it shouldn't be an often thing.

As far as frequency, once a season is plenty if someone is fishing a moderate to low amount. Someone who is fishing in waders almost daily could use a mid season wash to reactivate the DWR and clear things out.

Specifically, what detergent or soap?

We recommend the below tech washes:
Ivory® Snow powdered laundry detergent
ReviveX® Synthetic Fabric Cleaner
Nikwax® Tech Wash

Hand wash only, or is machine wash acceptable?

Waders can be rinsed with water as often as desired, but if machine washing follow the below instructions.

Remove all items from pockets before washing / Hand or Machine Wash Cold on gentle cycle / Use detergent made for waterproof breathable materials / Do not Bleach / Hang or Tumble Dry Low / Do not dry clean

Is using the dryer on low/delicate okay, or should waders always be line dried?

Waders should be hung to dry in most cases after fishing and a hose down clean, but to reactivate the DWR the one or two washes a season tumble dry low can be used – heat helps with activation

After washing, how should the DWR finish be rejuvenated? And how often? Every time or less than that?

We recommend the below to reapply the DWR coating
Nikwax® TX-Direct
McNett Revivex® Spray-On Water Repellent

Redington

How often should we wash our waders? After how many trips, or is there an indication that waders should be washed, such as seeing wet out on the legs?

You can wash them as many times as you feel necessary, but it's not required after every trip unless you're in a dirty environment. However, if you're fishing saltwater, you should absolutely spray the outside of your waders (and boots) down with freshwater after every session.

Doing a full 'washing' every 10 trips is a reasonable number to keep them from stinking, holding dirt, and for prolonging the life of your gear.

Specifically, what detergent or soap?

If you're looking to just do a quick clean, use dish soap (no bleach), combined with warm water in a bucket or tub, and agitate them by hand.

You can also use a technical cleaner like Nikwax.

Then rinse them off with your hose and leave them to hang dry. Once the outside is dry, turn the waders inside-out to dry the inside.

Hand wash only, or is machine wash acceptable?

We recommend only handwashing Redington waders in cold water.

Is using the dryer on low/delicate okay, or should waders always be line dried?

We recommend line drying only. Once the outside is dry, turn the waders inside-out to dry the inside. Machine dryers can damage the seams of any wader.

After washing, how should the DWR finish be rejuvenated? And how often? Every time or less than that?

Use a technical wash from Nikwax. Typically, when your waders start to “hold,” water and it stops beading up, is when you can apply a DWR treatment.

Simms

How often should we wash our waders? After how many trips, or is there an indication that waders should be washed, such as seeing wet out on the legs?

When you should wash your waders should be dictated by the face fabric. When the wader fabric begins to saturate or “wet out”, that’s when you should think about giving your waders a good wash.

Waders that are wetting out doesn’t mean they are leaking, it just means the fabric itself is holding water/moisture.

It’s also important to note, when your waders are wetting out, breathability is also compromised. So, washing your waders should accomplish two things: First, when your waders are thoroughly washed and dried, water should bead off once again. Second, the breathability of your waders should be restored.

Wash your waders as often as you need to remove such impurities as dirt and oils. Washing and drying your waders helps restore the durable water

repellent (DWR). It's also important to mention, if you wash your waders inside out, it can prolong the life of the wader. If the inside is getting stinky or musty at all, they need to be washed.

Mildew kills waders so cleaning and COMPLETELY drying the waders inside out is critical.

Specifically, what detergent or soap?

Consumers can/should use any laundry detergent they like — provided that detergent doesn't contain any fabric softener. In short, any kind of mild laundry detergent without fabric softener.

Hand wash only, or is machine wash acceptable?

As long as the washing machine does not have an agitator, or the agitator functionality is disabled, you can absolutely use a washing machine.

However, to be safe, I'd highly recommend ignoring the washing machine and hand wash. You spend so much money on a pair of waders, I'd rather spend a little more time and hand wash with a soft to medium/soft scrub brush and detergent that doesn't contain fabric softener.

That way, you don't have to worry about compromising the performance or construction of any seams, or suspender straps, zippers, gravel guards or anything like that. It's just a fool proof way to clean your waders without risk.

Is using the dryer on low/delicate okay, or should waders always be line dried?

Once again, you can use a dryer on a low temp on a delicate cycle, but to minimize risk, we'd recommend hanging them up and letting them air dry.

After washing, how should the DWR finish be rejuvenated? And how often? Every time or less than that?

If you do a thorough job scrubbing, rinsing and drying your waders, your DWR should rejuvenate. Once again, it's not just revitalizing the DWR, it's making sure the breathability performance is functioning.

Grease, fish slime, floatant, mud, dirt, etc — all of these types of things not only cause your wader to wet out, they clog the pores that allow the waders to breath.

Patagonia

1. A good rinse with fresh water after each outing is very important. Waders should be washed when they start to stink due to bacteria buildup or when you notice reduced water repellency.
2. We recommend using a specialized product like ReviveX Synthetic Fabric Cleaner or Nikwax Tech Wash for washing your waders. These are designed to clean without damaging the DWR.
3. Hand washing is preferred to preserve the longevity of your waders. If machine washing is necessary, use a front-load machine on a gentle cycle.
4. Waders can be dried in a machine dryer. Please dry them inside/out, and then reverse once the booties are dry to the touch. A low heat setting also helps to rejuvenate the DWR.
5. Rejuvenate the DWR finish when you notice water is no longer beading up on the fabric. You can use a product like ReviveX Durable Water Repellent or Nikwax TX.Direct Spray-On. This doesn't need to be done every time, only when you notice reduced water repellency.

Remember to always follow product instructions when washing and reapplying DWR:

<https://www.patagonia.com/product-care.html>